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NEWS RELEASE

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**GEORGIA TECH STARTING CORNERBACK CHARGED WITH MARIJUANA
CONSPIRACY ORCHESTRATED BY FRESNO BUSINESSMAN**

FRESNO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that REUBEN JAMES HOUSTON, 22, a senior starting cornerback for Georgia Tech and projected second round NFL draft pick, was arrested today in Atlanta, Georgia in connection with a marijuana distribution operation based in Fresno, California.

The case was investigated by the Fresno Methamphetamine Task Force, a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Initiative (HIDTA), which is comprised of law enforcement agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Fresno Police Department, Fresno County Sheriff's Department, Madera County Sheriff's Department, Merced County Sheriff's Department, California Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (BNE), and California Highway Patrol .

According to Assistant United States Attorney Karen Escobar, who is prosecuting the case, a federal criminal complaint filed in Fresno alleges that HOUSTON conspired to distribute and to possess with intent to distribute nearly 100 pounds of marijuana valued at approximately \$60,000. According to court documents, HOUSTON was to be the recipient of 100 pounds of marijuana fronted to him by OSCAR ROSALES, 39, of Fresno, and the owner of Exclusive Sounds, a stereo business located at 4376 W. Shaw Avenue in Fresno. At Rosales' direction, one of Rosales' couriers delivered the marijuana to Rosales' nephew, Anthony Baltazar, 22, of Turlock, California, in Atlanta, Georgia. Baltazar then drove the load of marijuana to the Georgia Tech campus to meet with his connection, HOUSTON, and complete the delivery.

According to court documents, the charge against HOUSTON stems from a year long investigation of the OSCAR ROSALES drug trafficking organization. The investigation revealed that ROSALES had been trafficking marijuana across the United States over the last ten years. The investigation culminated in the seizure of nearly 600 pounds of marijuana and the arrests of fifteen co-conspirators, including ROSALES. ROSALES is charged with engaging in a continuing criminal enterprise, an offense which carries a mandatory minimum penalty of twenty years in prison, a maximum penalty of life and a maximum fine of \$2 million. He is also currently charged with conspiring with sixteen co-conspirators, including Baltazar, to distribute and to possess with the intent to distribute 1,000 kilograms or more of marijuana. This offense carries a mandatory minimum penalty of ten years in prison, a maximum life term and a

maximum fine of \$4 million.

After an extensive evidentiary hearing, United States District Judge Oliver W. Wanger in Fresno ordered ROSALES to be detained while he awaits trial. Baltazar was also previously ordered detained by a United States Magistrate Judge without an evidentiary hearing.

The next district court appearance in this matter is scheduled before Judge Wanger on August 8, 2005.

The charges are only allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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